

STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

May 7, 2004
Omni Hotel North
Indianapolis, Indiana

APPROVED

ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Gary Bates, J. Lanier DeGrella, Cynthia Diamond, Karol Farrell, Terry Huser, Marcia Johnson, Bret Lewis, John Nally, Elaine Scaife, David Schmidt (Chair), Julie Swaim, Jane Swiss, Steve Tilden, Jim Hammond, Mary Ramos, Craig Bell, Martha Farris, and Becky Kirk

DOE STAFF PRESENT:

Bob Marra, Becky Bowman, Kim Payton

OTHERS PRESENT:

Tom Doyle, Julia Prather, and Dawn McGrath

David Schmidt called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m. A quorum was established. David presented an amendment to minutes from the November 2003 meeting that would reflect a change in the information reported on Project Vision. David read the proposed amendment and asked for a motion. Craig Bell moved to amend the November minutes as proposed. Gary Bates seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Council members reviewed draft minutes from February 2004. David asked for comments. Jim Hammond moved to approve the February minutes as written. Lanier DeGrella seconded the motion, and the council voted unanimously to approve the minutes as written.

Julia Prather and Tom Doyle made a presentation to the Council on the proposal to allow MSD of Pike Township to return to the West Central Joint Services special education cooperative. Tom's presentation included a chronology of events beginning with Pike's announcement of its intent to withdraw from the West Central Joint Services, a summary of Pike's actions to hire local staff to replace staff previously provided by West Central, the subsequent realization by Pike that its financial situation had changed such that withdrawing from the cooperative was no longer a viable option, and the administrative decision to remain with the cooperative. One of the conditions of the cooperative's agreement to allow Pike to return was a commitment that Pike would remain with the cooperative for at least five years. Julia continued the presentation by providing a handout of the revised comprehensive plan and reported that little has changed. They simply reversed the process that had begun when Pike planned to withdraw, although numbers have been updated. The superintendents' board felt that Pike's commitment was very important, and that with the continued growth of the member corporations, additional changes will be necessary. The board is planning for how the cooperative will look and operate in the next two to five years, and is already implementing some changes in the management structure from a programmatic basis to a geographic basis. Council members posed a number of questions to Julia and Tom on issues of staffing, parental involvement in decision making, preschool opportunities, changes being implemented, "stresses" on the system in order to

reassimilate Pike into the cooperative, interagency agreements, and community resources for students with mental health issues. Steve Tilden moved to recommend approval of the revised comprehensive plan; John Nally seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, and the members voted unanimously to recommend approval of the revised plan.

After a break, Dawn McGrath made a presentation and provided written materials to the Council on "Accounting for the Progress of All Students" and the Indiana Standards Tool for Alternate Reporting (ISTAR). Council members posed a variety of questions on parent participation in the assessment process, how a parent learns about ISTAR, and what ISTAR can tell a parent about a child's progress. Dawn also provided information that ISTAR can be used to provide information about high ability students and may be used to supplement ISTEP and that it has significant potential for showing a student's actual progress and acquisition of the academic standards even when the student is not passing ISTEP.

As a follow up, Bob Marra advised Council members that draft guidelines for determining participation in ISTAR in place of ISTEP were being reviewed. He also discussed a number of things the Department of Education needs to complete with respect to utilization of an alternate assessment such as ISTAR in order to carry out the requirements of No Child Left Behind.

The Council took a break for lunch.

During lunch, Bob provided the following update from the Division:

- Alternate Assessment—defining significant cognitive disability, reporting of test scores, and waiver of the 1% cap on the number of proficient scores on alternate achievement standards
- Federal funding—current year increase from \$200 million to \$226 million; 187% increase between 1999 and 2004 in the federal funds that flow through the Division to the local education agencies
- Preschool funding—change in assessed valuation method resulted in less than 1 cent revenue, therefore, less money is available in preschool fund (down from \$2750 per student last year to \$2683/student this year)
- APC (Adjusted Pupil Count—state special education funding)—due to a small surplus, the local education agencies got all the APC funds that had been projected
- Monitoring—the CIMS (Continuous Improvement Monitoring) information for next year has already been sent to the local education agencies; the Division is also looking at data from this year

Discuss among Bob and the Council members also touched on the Education Roundtable's recommendations to mandate Core 40 curriculum, data on limited licenses showing that the most frequently sought limited licenses is for emotional disabilities, highly qualified teachers and how the definition of highly qualified relates to the need for course competencies.

Council members discussed meeting dates for the 2004-2005 school year and agreed on the following: September 17 and November 5, 2004; February 11 and May 20, 2005. In addition, they identified the following agenda items: Reviewing the revised comprehensive plan for the Virtual Special Education Cooperative (tentative); having a representative from the Indiana Professional Standards Board discuss licensure and shortages; discussing how the Council wants to get involved in the teacher shortage issue; and planning for 2004-2005 issues.

The Council then met with members of the University Forum which began with introductions, a description of the Forum and its activities, and a handout entitled "Who Will Teach Indiana's Children with Disabilities?"

Susan Jacobs, a University Forum member, described the IDEAL project (Indiana Designs for Equitable Access to Learning). This is a project, currently funded by the Division, designed to share expertise between universities and to help each with their training needs. Web-based modules, developed by a variety of individuals, are designed to enhance courses taught at the universities. The modules may also be accessed by others to increase their knowledge. There are currently 27 modules on the web, ranging from how to create change within organization to specific topics like how to use graphic organizers. Even modules will be added by end of summer. The website is: <http://IDEAL.sf.edu>. Council and Forum members discussed several issues related to the modules, including parent and teacher awareness of their availability, marketing the modules, and introduction to and use of by college students in early phases of education.

Bill Littlejohn led the discussion between Council and Forum members on the connection between schools' ability to hire qualified personnel and the universities' "production" of these individuals. Pressure is brought to bear on the schools rather than the universities, yet the universities make decisions that impact the availability of highly qualified teachers.

Cathy Shea pointed out that the transition to teaching program mandated for all universities was primarily due to shortage of secondary math and science teachers, but not in special education where shortages also exist. It was also mandated in elementary education, although no shortages exist. This only solves part of the problem. The No Child Left Behind requirement of highly qualified teachers creates another problem—special education teachers teaching credit bearing courses without content licensure. Cathy referenced the guidelines by the Indiana Professional Standards Board (checklist) for highly qualified status. The university Forum wants to dialogue with special education directors.

Council and Forum members engaged in further discussion on how to address the shortage of special education teachers and generally agreed that it was not a simple problem to solve. Gary Collings suggested that the Advisory Council might want to have further dialogue with the Indiana Professional Standards Board regarding new licensure requirements and the problem that may arise as a result.

The Council and Forum members concluded their discussions and the Council members, by consensus, adjourned the meeting at 2:35.